

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 CU-04 IO-14

DRC-01 /151 W

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P 080645Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8083

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 1552

LONDON PASS DILLERY FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL AND HUMMEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS BM

SUBJECT: LULL IN UNREST

REF: STATE 121024

1. AS OF NOW, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT GUB USE OF FORCE JUNE 6-7 HAS SUCCEEDED IN DAMPING DOWN WORKERS' DEMONSTRATIONS WITHOUT TOUCHING OFF THE WAVE OF REACTION THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN FEARED. THINGS COULD STILL GET OUT OF HAND, AND THERE IS DOUBTLESS SOME SYMPATHY WITH STRIKERS AMONG THE MILITARY THEMSELVES; HOWEVER, GUB CONTROL OVER INFORMATION MEDIA, THE ABSENCE OF AN UNCONTROLLABLE FOREIGN PRESS CORPS, AND A PAST RECORD THAT MAKES ITS TOUGH LINE THREATS CREDIBLE HAVE DOUBTLESS STRENGTHENED GUB HAND.

2. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON WHETHER THE GUB CAN COMPLEMENT ITS TOUGH POLICY AGAINST DEMONSTRATORS WITH MEANINGFUL RELIEF OF THE RICE PROBLEM, AS PROMISED. OUR GUESS IS THAT GUB WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO MEET MINIMUM DEMANDS OF HARDEST-HIT ELEMENTS OF POPULATION. THERE ARE ALREADY SOME VERY TENTATIVE SIGNS OF A LEVELING OFF IN BLACK MARKET PRICES. THUS, GUB HAS GOOD CHANCE OF CONTAINING UN-
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REST UNTIL NEW STOCKS OF RICE START COMING IN.

3. IF GUB DOES WEATHER CURRENT EMERGENCY, IT WILL STILL FACE BLEAK PROSPECT OF EVEN WORSE SHORTAGES IN FUTURE BECAUSE OF ITS DOCTRINAIRE REFUSAL TO OFFER FARMERS HIGHER PRICES TO INDUCE THEM TO SELL TO GOVERNMENT. ALTERNATIVELY, ABANDONMENT OF PRESENT SYSTEM OF COMPULSORY SALES, WOULD REPRESENT SEVERE LOSS OF FACE FOR GOVERNMENT.

4. WE WILL OF COURSE BE KEEPING THIS SITUATION UNDER ANALYSIS, AND WILL INITIATE SITREPS IF CONDITIONS WORSEN. HOWEVER, IT LOOKS NOW AS THOUGH WE CAN AFFORD TO CONCENTRATE OUR ANALYSIS ON THE LONGER-RUN IMPLICATIONS.
OSBORN

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Message Attributes

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